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CARIBBEAN FOOD CROPS SOCIETY

45

Forty Fifth

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**Frigate Bay
Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis**

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St. Kitts Marriot Resort and Royal Beach Casino
Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

**“Reality and Potential of Food Security and Agricultural Diversification in
Small Island Developing States”**

**“Realidad y Potencial de la Seguridad Alimentaria y la Diversificación
Agrícola en Pequeños Estados Insulares en Desarrollo”**

**“Sécurité alimentaire et diversification agricole dans les petits états
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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA PESTICIDE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT: There are over 170 products listed for pest control with the Pesticide and Toxic Chemicals Board (PCB) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in Antigua and Barbuda. Safe handling and application of these products is crucial to achieving desired pest control and to protecting non-target organisms and the environment. The Pesticide and Toxic Chemicals Act of 2007 dictates that any person performing pest control activities for remuneration must be certified to do so. The MOA partnered with University of Florida/ IFAS to develop a pesticide certification training module modeled after the Florida program. The objectives of the module are to enhance the knowledge base of pest control applicators on identification of pests, on control options, and on safe use of pesticides, and to ensure that all actions governing the use of pesticides are in accordance with the requirements of the Act. A team of five UF/IFAS faculty members developed a needs assessment survey and modified the Florida curriculum based on the results of the survey submitted by the MOA. The module included four training categories: core (to be taken by all participants), structural pests, lawn and ornamentals, and agriculture. A one-week training session was conducted in January 2009; it was attended by 65 people that represented the various categories, and by MOA personnel. Sixty-three participants took the core exam and one category exam. Thirty-one participants passed both the core and a category exam and were certified through the PCB. A regular training and exam schedule is needed for pest control applicators to ensure compliance with the Act and proper pesticide usage to protect pesticide users, public health, and the environment.

Keywords: Pesticide certification, Pesticides, Environment

INTRODUCTION

The use of pesticides has local, regional, and international ramifications. Pesticides applied incorrectly can cause harm to humans, estuaries, ground water, fisheries, coral reefs, and can endanger pets and wildlife. The proper use of pesticides reduces labor by increasing the efficiency of those engaged in farming, landscaping, and structural pest control. All three areas of pesticide applications are important in protecting the quality of life for local residents and visitors alike. There are over 170 products listed for pest control with the Pesticide and Toxic Chemicals Board (PCB) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Lands and Marine Resources in Antigua and Barbuda. In 2007 the Antigua and Barbuda Pesticide and Toxic Chemicals Act was enacted. The act stated that anyone applying pesticides for money had to be certified to perform such services. As a result, the PCB needed to develop a certification training program.

The Director of Analytical Services/Chair of the PCB contacted the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension for assistance in developing a pesticide training program for Antigua and Barbuda. The chair of the PCB and the Chief Extension Officer of the Agriculture Extension Division (AED) of the MOA worked with four county extension faculty members and one state specialist on developing a program to address enhancing the knowledge base of pest control applicators on identification of pests, control options, safe use of pesticides. This program ensures that all actions governing the use of pesticides be in accordance with the requirements of the Act. The objectives of the module are

to enhance the knowledge base of pest control applicators on identification of pests, control options, and on safe use of pesticides, and to ensure that all actions governing the use of pesticides are in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

METHODS

The UF/IFAS faculty members developed a needs assessment survey to determine critical areas of need that must be addressed by the program. Based on the results of the survey, they modified the Florida Pesticide Certification Training Curriculum. A one-week training program was conducted by the UF/IFAS MOA team in January 2009 in St. John's, Antigua. The module included four training categories: Core, Structural Pests, Lawn and Ornamentals, and Agriculture. It was attended by 65 people that represented the various categories and MOA personnel. All participants took the core plus one category. Classes were combinations of lectures, hands-on training, and field demonstrations.



Training Team: L – R. Stephen Brown, Ken Rudisill, Norma Samuel, Malverne Spencer, Eugene McAvoy, and William (Bill) Kern, Jr.



Sprayer Calibration Exercise

RESULTS

Sixty-three participants took the core exam and 60% (38 passed). Twenty participants took the Structural Pest Control training and 25% (five) passed. Twenty-seven participants took the Agricultural category training and 81% (22) passed. Fourteen took the Lawn and Ornamental category exam and 57% (eight) passed. The following numbers (percentages) passed both the core and category exams: Agriculture 77.7% (21); Structural Pests 20% (four); and Lawn and Ornamentals 42.8% (six). The farmers performed better than the other participants because the Extension educational program in Antigua and Barbuda has as the main focus vegetable and fruit tree production. A Cooperative Agreement between UF/IFAS and MOA was signed and a structural pest control insect collection was started.

CONCLUSIONS

The AED needs to expand its regular training programs beyond agriculture to include lawn and ornamentals and structural pests. Farmers who successfully completed the training were given coveralls and first aid kits to help with their certification of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). The people who participated in this training will be able to make sound decisions on pest control issues.

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